

Things you can do to promote your child's well-being:

All children need and deserve nurturing, responsive, loving, consistent, sensitive relationships with their parents and other primary caregivers. This is essential and fundamental for their development and underlies your child's well-being.

Spend quality time with your child. Express an interest in your child's activities. Find time to play together. Remember, there will be years for cleaning and cooking, but children grow up when we're not looking.

- Ask your child about what he is doing.
- Join her while she is playing.
- Let your child guide the play.

Listen actively:

- Stop what you are doing.
- Make eye contact with your child.
- Pay attention to what she is saying.

Teach your children how to recognize and manage their feelings:

- Find time to talk about feelings. Show pictures of what different feelings look like.
- Label your child's feelings. Ask her what she is feeling, ("Are you angry?" "Are you scared?")
- Help your child talk about what he is feeling.

Let your children know that you value them:

- Separate self-worth from accomplishments ("Playing your hardest is more important than winning.").
- Separate self-worth from misbehavior ("No, you're not bad, but it is not OK to draw on the wall.").
- Acknowledge your child's uniqueness and tell her that you appreciate her.

Warning signs

Infants and toddlers (birth through 3 years old)

- Ongoing problems eating or sleeping.
- Fussiness or irritability that you cannot soothe.
- Incessant crying with little ability to be comforted.
- Cannot adapt to new situations.
- Flat affect: Little or no emotional response.
- Cannot establish relationships with adults and other children.
- Easily startled or alarmed by routine events.
- Excessive hitting, biting and pushing of other children.

Preschoolers (3 to 5 years old)

- Throws wild, despairing tantrums.
- Displays repeated aggressive or impulsive behavior.
- Hypervigilant: watchful, overly alert and cautious.
- Hyper-compliant: overly agreeable.
- Cannot play with others.
- Little or no communication.
- Little or no interest in social interaction.
- Lack of appropriate fear responses.
- Excessive self-stimulation.

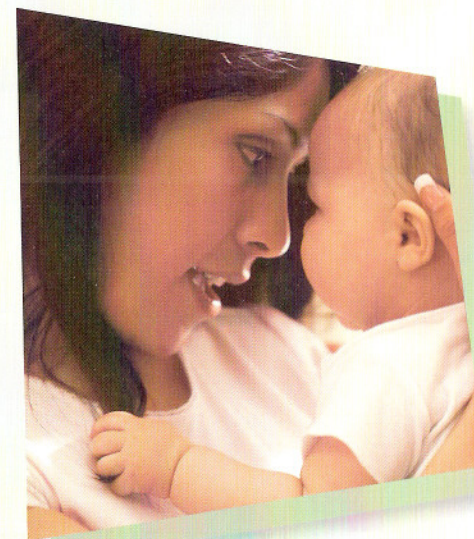


Suite 340
133 South Butler St.
Madison, WI 53703
Phone (608) 442-0360
Fax (608) 441-8920
www.wiaimh.org



Promoting your child's well-being

A guide to your child's social and emotional development from birth to age 5



Children with loving parents who enjoy them, play with them and offer guidance and suggestions as they explore their environment will be healthy, emotionally well-adjusted and psychologically advanced.

- "Einstein Never Used Flash Cards" by
K. Hirsh-Pasek, PhD and R.M. Golinkoff, PhD

Birth to 1 year old

Your child's perspective	What you can do
I love being held by you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick up and soothe crying baby. • Hold and cuddle him.
I love looking at your face.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk and sing to your baby. She loves to hear the same song or story over and over again.
I am curious about people and objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play with your child and join in his curiosity.
I need to trust you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish routines and predictability.

1 to 2 years old

Your child's perspective	What you can do
I can understand no-no and respect limits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set consistent limits.
I am proud when I can accomplish something.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let child repeat successes over and over again and provide new and challenging objects – blocks, puzzles, water and sand.
I am in love with the world and I like being with other children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out and name things you see together.
I can show you my likes and dislikes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let children know what is OK and what is not. Show acceptance of their developing preferences.

2 to 3 years old

Your child's perspective	What you can do
I am starting to understand how others are feeling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name your child's and others' feelings. • Read to your child. Use brightly colored books with lots of pictures.
I love it when you praise me for my behaviors and accomplishments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch them being good! Children love your attention.
I like to be independent, but sometimes I am worried about new experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage your child to explore and let him know you are always there for him.

3 to 4 years old

Your child's perspective	What you can do
I can understand your feelings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect your child's feelings. Remember, all feelings are valid and OK. It is how we respond to handle our feelings that matters.
I am able to use strategies or respond to frustration and I can learn ways of handling strong emotions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help your child recognize anger in himself and others. • Talk about how to calm down and relax when she feels angry.
I am better at sharing things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise your child's efforts to share things, but don't expect her to share all the time.
I love playing make-believe games.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend time together. Be enthusiastic and playful. Follow your child's lead.

4 to 5 years old

Your child's perspective	What you can do
I am well aware of what others are feeling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share in your child's feelings. Encourage him to talk about his emotions with you.
I can cooperate and play well with others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children learn a lot from their peers. Make sure your child spends time with friends.
I can find solutions to conflicts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play "What would you do if ...?" games with your child.

5 to 6 years old

Your child's perspective	What you can do
I understand that people can have mixed emotions about the same situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to your child about feelings. Tell her, "I understand how you feel." • Don't avoid or dismiss your child's feelings.
I try to please others and be like my friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage individuality, and understand and respect your child's desire to be like her friends.
I can tell the difference between fantasy and reality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and play together. Remember, play is learning!